

# Comal Independent School District

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Five alumni honored as CISD Outstanding Graduates**

Three Canyon High and two Smithson Valley High alumni were honored with the prestigious 2007 Comal ISD Outstanding Graduate Award during the Comal Public School Foundation's Academic Recognition Banquet May 15.

The award recognizes Comal Independent School District alumni for excellence and notable achievements since graduating. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year of the program. Each recipient received a specially designed acrylic award and a photo plaque of each honoree will hang on the schools' Wall of Honor.

The honorees are:

**Michael Wayne Dietert** (CHS '68) has turned his hard work ethic into a very successful local business career. He started out more than 42 years ago as a dishwasher at the New Braunfels Smokehouse and is now the Vice President and General Manager of all the New Braunfels Smokehouse ventures. He has also worked hard to preserve New Braunfels' uniqueness. Dietert is a member of the New Braunfels Rotary Club, the New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce and its Hall of Honor and is a past president and board member of the New Braunfels Heritage Society, the New Braunfels Conservation Society, and the Wurstfest Association. He earned a bachelor's degree in industrial arts from Southwest Texas State University. He and his wife of 38 years, Linda, have two children and two grandchildren.

**Paul "Shay" Garney** (SVHS '93) is a registered and licensed dietician who has dedicated his life to bettering the lives of others. He counsels pre-dialysis patients to try and postpone dialysis through nutrition and a megavitamin program. One paper he authored on the study of this landmark research was presented in November at the American Society of Nephrology convention in San Diego. Garney, who is the facility administrator at the DaVita Lone Star Clinic in Houston, also began a support group for patients and their families,

where his goal is to altogether alleviate the need for dialysis. He received his bachelor's and master's in nutrition from Texas Tech University.

**Paige Johnson Hunter, Ph. D.** (SVHS '92) is a successful business owner. She along with her husband and business partner, Daniel Hunter, has started and participated in numerous businesses ventures. Currently, Hunter proudly represents USANA Health Sciences as an independent distributor. She is co-owner of Pure Life, a company dedicated to creating a cleaner environment for Mexico and the U.S. Additionally, she helps oversee their ranch's quarter horse and goat breeding business. Besides her engagement with business endeavors, Hunter has conducted/presented research in over 10 countries. She is a published researcher in the fields of intercultural communication, liberatory education and international entrepreneurship. After living abroad in Japan and Mexico, she has moved back to the Texas Hill Country where she is an active member of Toastmasters International. Hunter enjoys raising awareness for two of her favorite philanthropic platforms, Shod for Peace Ministry, a local non-profit organization which supplies shoes to those in need, and Sower of Seeds, a ministry to orphanages and digging wells in India. She earned her bachelor's degrees in communication and Spanish from the University of Texas at San Antonio, her master's in communication studies with a minor in international business from New Mexico State University and her Ph.D. in international education and entrepreneurship from the University of the Incarnate Word.

**Robert Newman** (CHS '76) is a partner in one of the nation's largest law firms, Fulbright and Jaworski, L.L.P., in San Antonio. He's earned a great deal of respect for his broad range of work in legal ethics since joining the firm in 1985. Newman is listed in such prestigious publications as *Who's Who in American Law*, *Who's Who in the World*, *Best Lawyers in America* (2005-06) and was named a Texas Super Lawyer by *Texas Monthly* in October 2005 and 2006. From 1994-96, he served as a special prosecutor for the State Bar of Texas in a disbarment trial. In his spare time, he is a trustee for Southwest Research Institute and also mentors children in the "City Kids Adventure" program, which teaches outdoor skills and adventures to inner city youngsters. He earned a bachelor's in history and political science from Southwest Texas State and earned his jurisprudence degree from St. Mary's University.

**Michael Rutherford** (CHS '79) is a dedicated member of the New Braunfels Police Department and is a 21-year veteran of the force. He gives up his family time during the summer to help keep the Comal River safe and fun

and hardly ever says the word 'no' when it comes to helping the citizens of New Braunfels. He was recently promoted to Patrol Lieutenant after serving as a detective in the Criminal Investigations Division. Rutherford has volunteered as a reader to young school children, participated in the Comal ISD's Walk to School Program, provided security at several Project Graduation functions and been a team member for the past three years during the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. He attended Southwest Texas State University and the San Antonio College Law Enforcement Academy and is the father of two sons.

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